

California Strategic Growth Council



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CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL AWARDS \$45.3 MILLION FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANTS AND URBAN GREENING GRANTS *Proposition 84 Funding Will Benefit Communities Statewide*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) today announced \$45.3 million in local assistance grants that will lead to more sustainable communities across California. A total of 93 individual awards will go to cities, counties, regional and local agencies, and nonprofit partners. All awards are funded through voter-approved Proposition 84 bond allocations.

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grants fund climate action plans, infill development plans, sustainable community strategies, and other planning efforts, all specifically aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state climate goals. The Urban Greening Grants establish or enhance community green areas such as urban forests, open spaces, wetlands, and community gardens.

“These important planning grants are local and regional in scale, but the outcomes and economic impacts of sustainable communities are truly statewide, benefiting all Californians,” said Secretary for Natural Resources and SGC Member John Laird. “These projects will go a long way to help create cleaner water, more open space, and smarter growth in California.”

Of the \$45.3 million in grants, \$24.6 million is through the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. In a pool of 137 applications, 43 proposals received awards through this program. For example:

Tulare County will use a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant of \$939,861 to fund two planning efforts: one to address arsenic contamination in drinking water and another to address polluting septic systems. These pilot programs will demonstrate sustainable models to improve living conditions in disadvantaged rural communities.

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) will use a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant of \$1 million to assist local governments in implementing SCAG’s recently adopted 2012 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. SCAG will provide local jurisdictions with financial and technical assistance, performance monitoring tools, and a regional learning network.

\$20.7 million of the grants being announced today is through the Urban Greening Grant Program, of which approximately three-quarters goes toward urban greening projects and one-quarter goes toward urban greening plans. Out of the 104 applications, 50 received awards through this program. For example:

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The city of Ontario will use an Urban Greening Grant of \$993,694 to convert a parking lot into a new 1.77 acre town square. The community plaza will be a gathering space for downtown residents and visitors and will include climate-appropriate trees and vegetation. Permeable surfaces will help recharge groundwater by collecting 100 percent of the project's runoff.

Through a subset of the Urban Greening Grants designated for small projects in disadvantaged communities, Freedom Farms, a non-profit corporation, will use \$75,000 to develop a joint-use community/school garden on five acres of vacant land at Jedediah Smith Elementary School in Sacramento. In addition to its ecological value, the farm will provide educational and public health benefits to the school and community.

"Individually, these grants will each make an important impact. Taken together, the collective benefit to the state is immense," said SGC Executive Director Heather Fargo. "These projects and plans play a critical role in helping California achieve its climate change goals."

Both grant programs prioritize funding for economically disadvantaged communities. Three-quarters of the Urban Greening projects were awarded to disadvantaged communities, and a majority of Sustainable Community Planning Grants for cities and counties were awarded to such communities.

This is the second round of funding that has been awarded by the SGC through these two grant programs. In 2013, the SGC plans to solicit applications for a third round of funding.

In 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act, which authorized the Legislature to appropriate funds to support urban greening projects and sustainable community planning.

The Strategic Growth Council is a cabinet level committee that coordinates the activities of state agencies and partners with stakeholders to promote sustainability, economic prosperity, and quality of life for all Californians.

Proposition 84 Urban Greening grantees and Sustainable Community Planning grantees may be found on the Strategic Growth Council's website: <http://www.sgc.ca.gov>